

SENATE—Thursday, May 24, 2001

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MICHAEL D. CRAPO, a Senator from the State of Idaho.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, Lord of the ups and downs of life, Lord of the seeming triumphs and supposed disappointments, Lord who does not change in the midst of change, we come to You for Your strength and Your power. Make us hopeful people who expect great strength from You and continue to attempt great strategies for You. Today especially, we ask You to fill this Chamber with Your presence and each Senator—Democrat, Republican, Independent—with Your special resiliency. Replenish our wells with Your peace that passes understanding. We claim Your promise through Isaiah—*Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, I am your God. I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you; and I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.* Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MICHAEL D. CRAPO led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. THURMOND).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 24, 2001.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL D. CRAPO, a Senator from the State of Idaho, to perform the duties of the Chair.

STROM THURMOND,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CRAPO thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

SCHEDULE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, today the Senate will be in a period for morning business until 11:30 a.m., with Senators THOMAS and DURBIN in control. Following morning business, the Senate may begin consideration of any legislative or executive items available for action. The conference report to accompany the tax reconciliation bill is expected to be available no later than Friday. Therefore, we expect votes throughout the remainder of the week.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

CONFERENCE REPORT PROGRESS

Mr. REID. Will the Senator from Wyoming yield?

Mr. THOMAS. Absolutely.

Mr. REID. I see the chairman of the Finance Committee. I ask him if we made progress on the conference.

Mr. THOMAS. The chairman is going to take a few minutes.

Mr. REID. The reason I say that, it is Thursday morning early, but we have already been getting calls on this side about people wanting to make parades on Saturday and things of that nature. I hope the Senator will be good enough this morning and during the day to keep us posted on how the conference is proceeding so we are better equipped to answer the phone calls we get.

Mr. THOMAS. I yield to the chairman of the Finance Committee.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I thank the distinguished Democratic leader for asking the question. I hope I can answer it. Remember, I have tried to conduct the work of the Finance Committee in a very transparent way and with open communication with everybody. So there will not be anything about this conference committee, except the specific negotiations, that will be kept from anybody.

Last night there were some—well, yesterday over the course of the afternoon and evening there were three informal meetings, and they are going to continue this morning, probably in just a few minutes. There have not been any decisions made yet, but the normal give and take that has to be done before settling down to serious negotiation is done and out of the way.

What I can best inform you about is that at the trail end of our visiting

yesterday the Speaker of the House came to our meeting and he informed all conferees that he had instructed the House of Representatives that they would stay in session into the weekend until this conference report was adopted. That does not mean we have to be in on the weekend.

There has to be a realization that there has to be a slot of give and take. There is good spirit about the conference at this point, and we will just have to work our way through it. That is all I can tell the Senator. I will be glad to keep him informed anytime he wants to ask, and even if he does not ask, I know I have a responsibility to keep him informed, and I will try to do that.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for not to exceed 5 minutes.

Under the previous order, the time until 10:45 a.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Wyoming, Mr. THOMAS, or his designee.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, is the Senator from Wyoming finished?

Mr. THOMAS. I yield to the Senator.

NOMINATION OF DAVID CHU

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to speak about something I have often spoken about in this Chamber. My colleagues have not heard me speak about this for a couple months. I try to follow on a very regular basis what is going on in the Defense Department because I want to make sure our defense dollars are spent wisely.

I come to this Chamber today to explain my opposition to a Department of Defense nomination. This is the nomination of Dr. David Chu to be Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

On Friday, May 18, I placed a hold on Dr. Chu's nomination. It happens that Dr. Chu is a very talented person. Those people who know him may wonder why I have some question about him filling this position because he is so highly educated, holding a Ph.D. from Yale University. He has a very impressive resume, and he has an extensive management and analytical background. He is currently vice president at the prestigious Rand Corporation.

In most ways, he is qualified for the position for which he has been nominated. I emphasize, he is qualified in